



What Skills and Knowledge Will My Child's Kindergarten Teacher Expect?

The academic and social skills and knowledge expected for kindergartners depends on the curriculum offered by your child's school and the standards that your child will be expected to meet by the end of the school year. Some commonly expected skills of beginning kindergarten students include the ability to:

- Recognize, name and print alphabet letters he or she often sees, such as his or her own name, etc.;
- Listen attentively to and follow instructions;
- Understand that words convey meaning and know that words run from left to right across the page and from top to bottom;
- Concentrate on and finish a task;
- Notice and work with sounds of language and recognize when a series of words begin with the same sound;
- Use spoken language to express his or her thoughts and ideas;
- Follow school and classroom rules;
- Produce circles, lines, scribbles and letters as part of his or her early writing;
- Recognize numbers and understand that they stand for quantity, order and measurement;
- Know how to hold and look at a book;
- Recognize, name and manipulate basic shapes; and
- Do as much for themselves as possible, such as taking care of their personal belongings, going to the toilet, washing their hands and taking care of and putting away materials.



Develop Your Child's Listening and Speaking Skills

If your child is provided an environment that allows him or her to listen to and use language constantly, he or she can begin to acquire the building blocks for learning how to read and write. By the time your child enters elementary school, he or she should be able to:

- Listen carefully for different purposes;
- Use spoken language for a variety of purposes;
- Follow and give simple directions;
- Ask and answer questions;
- Use appropriate volume and speed when he or she speaks; and
- Use language to express and describe his or her feelings and ideas.

For more information:

Helping Your Pre-School Child, U.S. Department of Education at:
www.ed.gov/parents/academic/preschool/part_pg4.html#p4

My Child's Academic Success, U.S. Department of Education at:
www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/succeed/part4.html

Questions Parents Ask About Schools, U.S. Department of Education at:
www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/questions/index.html



Is your child ready for Elementary School?

A parent's guide for preparing their child for educational *success*...



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our Child's Capacity to Learn

Young children have a tremendous capacity to learn from the moment they are born, but their development often hinges on the experiences provided for them by the adults who take care of them. Research shows that your child is more likely to succeed in learning if you actively support him or her. Involve your child in activities that allow him or her to:

- Talk
- Explore
- Experiment

Some ways for you to encourage your child to learn include:

- Showing your child that learning is both enjoyable and important.
- Encouraging your child to play, which allows him or her to learn, explore, develop social skills, solve problems, listen, negotiate, take turns and share.
- Encouraging your child to take part in various conversations throughout the day.
- Asking your child questions that require him or her to give more than a "yes" or "no" response.
- Answering your child's questions and encouraging your child to answer his or her own questions.
- Listening to your child.



reparing Your Child for School: Socially and Emotionally

Children start school with different levels of social and emotional maturity. Give your child opportunities at home to develop the following qualities:

- **Confidence** — feeling good about his or her abilities to succeed;
- **Independence** — doing things for himself or herself;
- **Motivation** — wanting to learn;
- **Curiosity** — using his or her natural curiosity to learn;
- **Persistence** — finishing what he or she starts;
- **Cooperation** — getting along with others and being able to share and take turns;
- **Self-control** — knowing that there are good and bad ways to express emotions; and
- **Empathy** — having an interest in others and understanding how others feel.

You can help your child develop social and emotional qualities that will prepare him or her for educational success by:

- Showing your child that you care about him or her. Children who feel loved are more likely to be confident;
- Setting a good example. When you treat other people with respect, your child probably will too;
- Letting your child do many things by himself or herself;
- Encouraging your child to make his or her own choices, rather than deciding everything for him or her;
- Helping your child find positive ways to solve conflicts with others; and
- Creating opportunities for your child to share and care.



reading is at the Heart of All Learning

Helping your child become a reader is the most important thing you can do to help your child be prepared for success in school. You can help your child be ready for elementary school by making reading an enjoyable experience. Some examples of ways you can encourage your child to enjoy reading include:

- **Reading** to your child frequently;
- **Choosing** a comfortable place where your child can sit near you;
- **Being** enthusiastic about reading;
- **Pointing** word-by-word as you read a book to help your child learn that reading goes from left to right;
- **Reading** your child's favorite book over and over;
- **Reading** stories with rhyming words and repeated lines;
- **Stopping** and asking about the pictures and what is happening in the story;
- **Offering** explanations, making observations and helping your child to notice new information;
- **Explaining** words your child may not know;
- **Pointing** out how the pictures in the book relate to the story; and
- **Talking** about the characters' actions and feelings.